

REMARKS

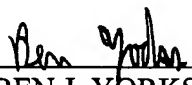
The above entitled application is a continuation of Application No. 09/585,566. The '566 application contained both apparatus and method claims. In response to an Office Action dated May 21, 2003, the applicant canceled the apparatus claims and pursued the method claims. The method claims received a Notice of Allowance dated July 1, 2003. The apparatus claims of the '566 application were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Dybbs. The applicant would like to take this opportunity to address the previous rejection.

The claims recite a blade holder with a reference surface that is in contact with an inner cavity reference surface of a microkeratome. The Examiner had identified item 120 in Fig. 8 of Dybbs as the reference surface. Item 120 is not a surface that is in contact with an inner cavity wall of the microkeratome. The applicant is enclosing herein an annotated version of Fig. 8 showing the reference surface of Dybbs that is in contact with the inner cavity wall. This surface of Dybbs is not attached to and in contact with the rear edge of the blade as recited in the claims of the above-entitled application. For this reason Dybbs does not anticipate the claims.

The applicant hereby requests that the Examiner enter this amendment and allow claims 1-3, 5-11 and 13-15 of the above-entitled application.

Respectfully submitted,
IRELL & MANELLA, LLP

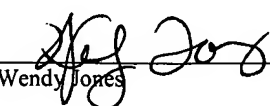
Dated: September 25, 2003



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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being sent via facsimile transmission to Attn: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313 on September 25, 2003.



Wendy Jones

9/25/03

Date

